

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 OES-03 INT-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /077 W

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P R 132357Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3020

INFO AMCONSUL TIJUANA

AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, MX

SUBJECT: TIJUANA FLOODS BLAMED ON U.S.

1. MEXICO CITY'S INFLUENTIAL EXCELSIOR CHARGED IN AN EDITORIAL AND AN OP-ED CARTOON FEB 13 THAT THIS WEEK'S EXTENSIVE TIJUANA RIVER FLOODING, WHICH REPORTEDLY CAUSED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE AND LEFT MANY HOMELESS, RESULTED FROM FAILURE OF U.S. TO COMPLETE ITS END OF 1970 TIJUANA RIVER FLOOD CONTROL AGREEMENT. PAPER NOTES THAT MEXICO HAD COMPLETED ITS OWN PART OF JOINT PROJECT AIMED AT CONTROLLING RIVER WATERS, BUT ASSERTS THAT U.S. FAILURE TO DO SO HAD OBLIGED SAN ISIDRO, CALIFORNIA FARMERS TO ERECT DIKES TO PREVENT THEIR LANDS FROM BEING FLOODED BY WATERS FROM SOUTH OF BORDER. COLLECTIVE RESULTS OF THESE DIKES, SAID EDITORIAL, WAS TO BACK UP FLOOD WATERS ON TIJUANA SIDE, WITH RESULTANT DAMAGE, RATHER THAN PERMIT THEM TO BE CHanneled OFF HARMLESSLY, AS FORESEEN IN 1970 AGREEMENT.

2. CARTOON SHOWS UNCLE SAME SMILING SECURELY FROM BEHIND BRICK WALL AT TIJUANA MEXICAN STRUGGLING TO STAY
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AFLOAT IN FLOOD WATERS, WHILE LATTER CALLS OUT: "AND

WHENEVER YOU WANT ME TO SOLVE ANOTHER PROBLEM FOR YOU,
JUST LET ME KNOW."

3. COMMENT: EXCELSIOR IS CERTAINLY CORRECT IN FAULT-
ING US FOR NOT HAVING FULFILLED OUR SIDE OF 1970 RIVER
CHANNEL BARGAIN, BUT IT IS STRETCHING MATTERS TO BLAME
FLOODS ON OUR INCOMPLETED CHANNEL WORKS. IBWC IN EL
PASO ADVISES US THAT "DIKE" (SINGULAR) IN QUESTION HAS
NOTHING TO DO WITH FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT BUT WAS IN
FACT ERECTED (PRIVATELY) TO PRESENT REFUSE FROM TIJUANA
RIVER TRIBUTARY FROM FLOWING ONTO U.S. FARMLAND ALONG
BORDER, IN AN AREA DISTANT FROM RIVER ITSELF. TRIBUTARY,
MOREOVER, FAILS TO DRAIN PROPERLY BECAUSE OF MEXICAN
FAILURE TO KEEP CHANNEL FREE OF SILT.

4. IBWC ALSO ADVISES US THAT GROUP OF MEXICANS
CROSSED BORDER SEVERAL NIGHTS AGO AND CUT OPENINGS IN
CONTROVERSIAL DIKE. ITS ENGINEERS ARE CONVINCED DIKE
WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE IN ANY WAY FOR FLOODING, BUT
MEXICANS SEEM TO BE PERSUADED OTHERWISE.
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